



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Indiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 8, 2012

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U.S. ATTORNEY'S VIOLENT CRIME INITIATIVE RESULTS IN SEVEN FEDERAL CHARGES ON ROBBERY, GUN CHARGES

Central Indiana defendants include three Indianapolis men facing firearms offenses

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS – Joined by federal and local law enforcement, Josh Minkler, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, announced today the indictment of seven individuals on federal gun charges, including two Indianapolis residents, as well as an Indianapolis resident charged by Information. All of the charges resulted from collaborative investigations as part of the ongoing U.S. Attorney's Violent Crime Initiative.

"Just two years ago, illegally-armed felons were being indicted by the U.S. Attorney's Office at a rate of just one prosecution per month," Minkler noted. "Last year, we averaged more than eight prosecutions per month, and I applaud the hard work of the law enforcement partners here today who have helped us maintain that pace in 2012."

Those charged by indictment include the following defendants:

- **Carlos Ortiz**, age 22, of Indianapolis – Hobbs Act robbery; brandishing a firearm during a crime of violence; possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

It is alleged that on October 15, 2011, Ortiz attempted to rob an Indianapolis auto parts store, brandishing a Taurus .356 caliber handgun in the process. Ortiz's criminal history includes two felony robbery convictions (October 2008).

- **Andre L. Williams**, age 40, of Indianapolis – possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

It is alleged that on October 27, 2011, Williams was found by Marion County law enforcement to possess a Smith and Wesson .40 caliber pistol. Williams' criminal

history indicates multiple Marion County felony convictions, including robbery (July 1991), possession of cocaine (December 1998), and battery (February 2007).

- **Raymond T. Barnes**, age 48, of Darlington – possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

On November 28, 2011, a Montgomery County court issued a warrant for Barnes' arrest. Barnes reportedly barricaded himself in his Darlington home, and after a lengthy stand-off, surrendered himself. A subsequent search revealed a Bryco, 9 mm handgun, which the indictment alleges Barnes illegally possessed as a convicted felon. Barnes' criminal history includes prior felony convictions for resisting Montgomery County law enforcement (June 2008, June 2010).

- **Thomas E. Behling II**, age 44, of Martinsville – possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

It is alleged that between December 2011 and January 2012, Behling illegally possessed numerous firearms, including a Marlin .35 caliber rifle, as well as two Winchester 30-30 caliber rifles. Behling's criminal history includes convictions for the possession of cocaine in Marion County (2001 and 2004), residential entry in Morgan County (2002), theft in Hendricks County (2003), identity theft in Morgan County (2006), and domestic battery in Morgan County (2009).

- **Brian S. Christie**, age 36, of New Castle – possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

It is alleged that on December 31, 2011, Christie illegally possessed a Taurus .22 caliber pistol. Christie's criminal history indicates two prior Henry County felony convictions, including theft (January 2007) and possession of marijuana (July 2008).

- **Andre Wells**, age 23, of Bloomington – possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

It is alleged that on December 1, 2011, Andre Wells was found by Bloomington law enforcement to be illegally in possession of a Hi-Point .45 caliber handgun. Wells' criminal history includes two convictions for theft, (August 2009, August 2011), both of which were in Monroe County.

In addition, the following individual was charged by information today:

- **Eric D. Battle**, age 32, of Indianapolis – possession of a firearm by a convicted felon

It is alleged that on February 8, 2012, Battle was found by Marion County law enforcement to possess an AMT .45 caliber semi-automatic handgun and ammunition. Battle's criminal history includes felony convictions in Marion County on charges of receiving stolen parts (October 2000) and possession of marijuana (March 2011).

Announced in March of 2011, the Violent Crime Initiative (VCI) represents a district-wide strategy to work with local law enforcement and county prosecutors to combat drug traffickers and criminals that use and carry firearms in their illegal activities. In the first nine months of the initiative, the VCI produced a dramatic increase in the number of gun-related charges brought federally – from just 14 felony possession charges in 2010 to 103 last year. Already in 2012, 21 felon in possession charges have been filed as part of the VCI, putting the office on pace to exceed last year's total.

The above prosecutions were the result of collaborative federal-local investigations, with significant assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Indiana State Police; Marion County Sheriff's Department; Montgomery County Sheriff's Department; Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department; and the Bloomington Police Department Special Investigations Unit.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Barry D. Glickman, Doris L. Pryor, and Matthew J. Rinka, who are prosecuting these cases for the United States, all of the above defendants face a possible penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and up to three years of supervised release upon release if they are convicted. In each case, an initial hearing will be scheduled before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Indianapolis.

An indictment or information is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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